

Message Text

SECRET

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ACTION EB-03

INFO OCT-01 SS-14 ISO-00 AF-04 TRSE-00 FEA-02 INR-05

CIAE-00 NSAE-00 DODE-00 PM-03 IGA-01 OES-02 L-01

ABF-01 IO-06 OMB-01 SP-02 PRS-01 /047 W

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FM AMEMBASSY ACCRA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 962

S E C R E T ACCRA 8553

LIMDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: ENRG, OPEC, GH

SUBJ: OPEC MEETING IN CARACAS; OIL PRICES

REF: STATE 264258

1. AMBASSADOR MET NOVEMBER 10 WITH AMBASSADOR HARRY AMONOO, ACTING SENIOR PRINCIPAL SECRETARY (SPS), MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFIARS (MFA), TO PRESENT US CASE AGAINST OPEC OIL PRICE RISE, PER REFTEL. AMONOO, RECENTLY RETURNED FROM BONN, IS NORMALLY THIRD RANKING CIVIL SERVANT OF MFA, BUT SPS OTOO AND AMBASSADOR AKWEI (ECONOMIC AFFAIRS) BOTH OUT OF COUNTRY UNTIL NEXT WEEK. AMONOO HAD JOE CLELAND, SUPERVISING DIRECTOR FOR ECONOMIC RELATIONS AND J. ADUSEI, ACTING SUPERVISING DIRECTOR FOR EUROPE AND AMERICAS DIVISION. ECON COUNSELOR ALSO PRESENT.

2. AMBASSADOR LEFT INFORMAL WORKING PAPER SETTING FORTH US POSITION PER PARAS 5 THRU 8, REFTEL AND DREW ON PARTS OF PARAS ONE TO FOUR IN PRESENTING US VIEWS.

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3. AMBASSADOR AMONOO OFFERED QTE PRELIMINARY UNQTE REACTION, NOTING THAT GHANA HAD RECORD OF SENSITIVITY TO OIL PRICE RISES, HAVING ISSUED PUBLIC STATEMENTS IN PAST EXPRESSING ITS CONCERN OVER ADVERSE IMPACT ON GHANA. SUBJECT TO FULL CONSIDERATION OF US DEMARCHE, AMONOO SAID QTE WE WILL BE ABLE TO TALK TO SOME OF OUR FREIENDS TO SEE WHAT CAN BE DONE

UNQTE TO ENCOURAGE PRICE FREEZE IN 1978. HE ALSO NOTED, HOWEVER, THAT SUCH EFFORTS WERE QTE NOT ALWAYS SUCCESSFUL UNQTE.

4. ENSUING DISCUSSION BROUGHT OUT FOLLOWING ATTITUDES AND QUESTIONS, AMONG OTHERS;

A. INCREASED OIL IMPORTS BY MAJOR BUYERS (E.G. U.S.) COULD RENDER INEFFECTIVE OTHER BUYERS' PLEAS TO KEEP PRICES DOWN. IN RESPONSE, WE POINTED TO PRESIDENT CARTER'S ENERGY PROGRAM AND GAVE AMONOO TEXT OF PRESIDENT'S NOVEMBER 8 TV ADDRESS. WE ALSO NOTED THAT ALASKA NORTH SLOPE AND NORTH SEA PRODUCTION HAD REDUCED OPEC SALES IN PAST FEW MONTHS.

B. LINK WITH MID-EAST POLITICAL SITUATION. AMONOO NOTED THIS LINK EXISTING QTE IN SOME COUNTRIES' VIEWS UNQTE. IN RESPONSE, AMBASSADOR POINTED TO EXTREMELY ACTIVE ROLE BEING PLAYED BY U.S. TO PROMOTE PEACE IN MID-EAST.

C. COST OF OIL IMPORTS TO GHANA. OIL IMPORT BILL RUNS ABOUT DOLS 150 MILLION ANNUALLY AT PRESENT AND, AS CLELAND STRESSED, PRICES OF PRODUCT AND SUCH MANUFACTURES AS NITROGENOUS FERTILIZERS WOULD RISE FAR MORE THAN FIVE PERCENT INCREASE IN CRUDE OIL PRICE,
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HITTING DIRECTLY AT GHANAIAN FOREIGN EXCHANGE BUDGET. WE AGREED. AMBASSADOR AGAIN STRESSED WIDER IMPLICATIONS FOR WORLD TRADE PER PARAS 5, 6, AND 7 REFTEL.

5. COMMENT: WHILE GOG HAS CLEARLY TAKEN NO DECISION YET, WE BELIEVE THEY WILL APPROACH AT LEAST SOME OPEC MEMBERS TO URGE A PRICE FREEZE DECISION AT CARACAS.

6. DEPT MAY WISH REPEAT THIS MESSAGE TO ACTION ADDRESSEES OF REFTEL.
SMITH

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NNN

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